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AMAR CHITRA KATHA

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Mahabharata –

The Escape

Sri Vidyabharathi Book Centre, Sringeri

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MAHABHARATA

The Mahabharata is the longest epic known to man. It is also what may be called the total epic because, besides being a literary classic, it is a supreme work of philosophy and an exhaustive manual of morals and manners.

The origin of the Mahabharata is shrouded in mystery. Countless scholars have pried into the work to discover the personality of its author, Veda Vyasa, to pin down its date of composition, and to analyse its historical veracity. But doubts still persist on all these counts.

Was it possible for one person to compose over a hundred thousand verses? Handed down by oral tradition, was the Mahabharata written down in 800 B.C. or 600 B.C. or 300 B.C.? Can the levels of Painted Grey Ware and Northern Black Polished Ware, or the names of present-day cities and plains, or the radio-carbon tests of excavated materials, vouch for its historicity? There is no conclusive answer.

The core of the tale – the feud between the princely cousins, the Pandavas and the Kauravas, leading to the eighteen-day-long bloody war – must have had its roots in some real event. The text with its available recensions points to three oral versions : the first as recited by Veda Vyasa himself, the next as recited by his disciple Vaishampayana to Janamejaya, and the third as narrated again by one Sauti, who had heard Vaishampayana's recital. Additions and interpolations must have crept in at various times, till the advent of the printing-press and standard editions.

Amar Chitra Katha has already presented many popular stories from the Mahabharata, chosen for their emotional and dramatic appeal and often modified to suit the Chitra Katha mode.

The current series of 60 volumes, on the other hand, faithfully follows the original Sanskrit text even as it is condensed.

OUR FORTHCOMING TITLES:

November 1, 1985

Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das

November 15, 1985

Mahabharata-9
The Birth of Ghatotkacha

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Mahabharata–8
THE ESCAPE

VEDA VYASA'S EPIC ON THE BHARATA RACE WAS FIRST RECITED IN PUBLIC, BY HIS DISCIPLE VAISHAMPAYANA, AT THE BEHEST OF THE AGELESS SEER VYASA HIMSELF.

THE RECITAL TOOK PLACE IN THE AUGUST PRESENCE OF KING JANAMEJAYA— GREAT-GRANDSON OF VYASA—AND THE MANY LEARNED SAGES WHO HAD ASSEMBLED FOR JANAMEJAYA'S SARPA SATRA.

THE SEVENTH SESSION OF OUR RENDERING OF VAISHAMPAYANA'S RECITAL OF VYASA'S MAHABHARATA RECOUNTED HOW THE ASCENDANCY OF THE SONS OF PANDU OVER HIS OWN, ROUSED THE ENVY OF DHRITARASHTRA; AND HOW HE, ADVISED BY HIS POLITICAL MENTOR KANIKA AND ABETTED BY HIS SON DURYODHANA, PLOTTED THE EXILE OF THE PANDAVAS TO THE CITY OF VARANAVATA.

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AS THE PANDAVAS ARRIVED AT VARANAVATA, THEY WERE WELCOMED JOYFULLY AND CEREMONIALLY BY THE PEOPLE THERE, AND THE ENTIRE CITY WENT GAY.

THE PANDAVAS RECIPROCATED BY VISITING THE HOMES OF PEOPLE OF DIVERSE STATIONS. THEN PUROCHANA LED THEM TO A PALACE.

FOR TEN DAYS THEY STAYED IN THAT PALACE ATTENDED BY PUROCHANA AND THE CITIZENS. THEN PUROCHANA SPOKE TO THE PRINCES OF THE MANSION EXCLUSIVELY BUILT FOR THEM. AT HIS INSTANCE THE PANDAVAS LEFT THE PALACE...

"...AND ENTERED THE MANSION. AND YUDHISHTHIRA SENSING THE AROMA OF GHEE AND FAT AND LACQUER...

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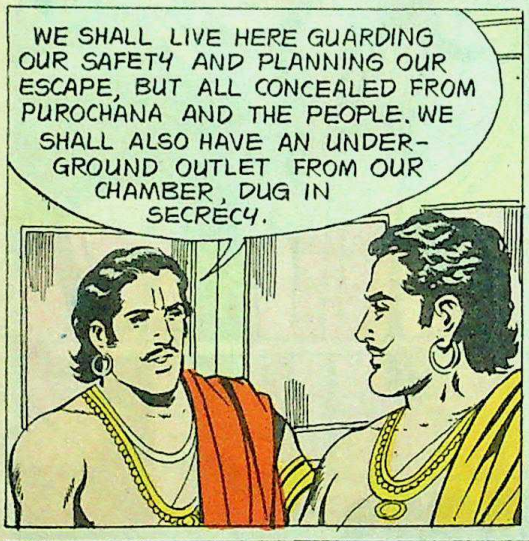

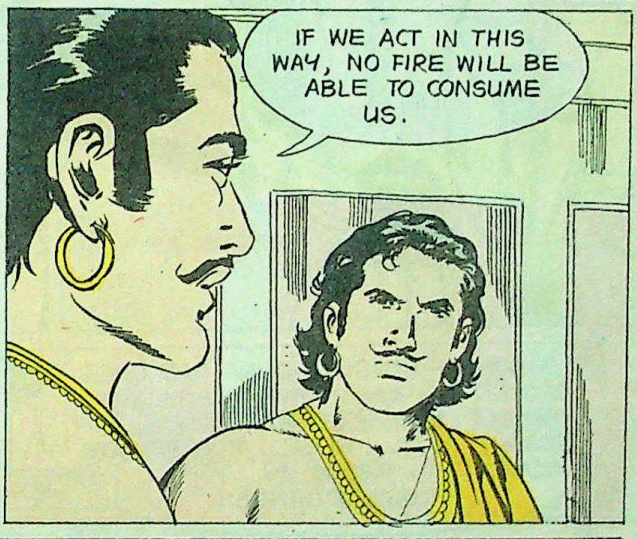

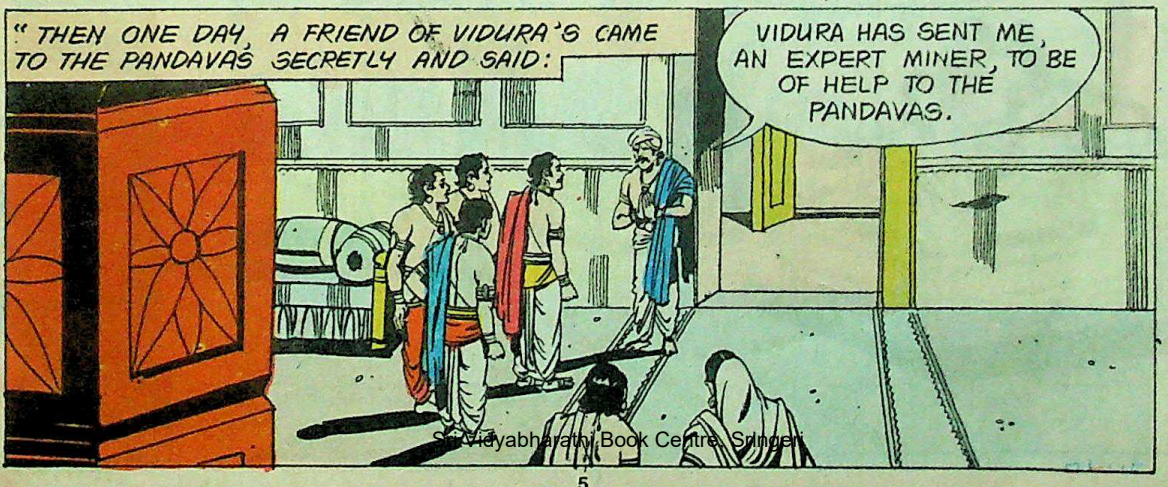

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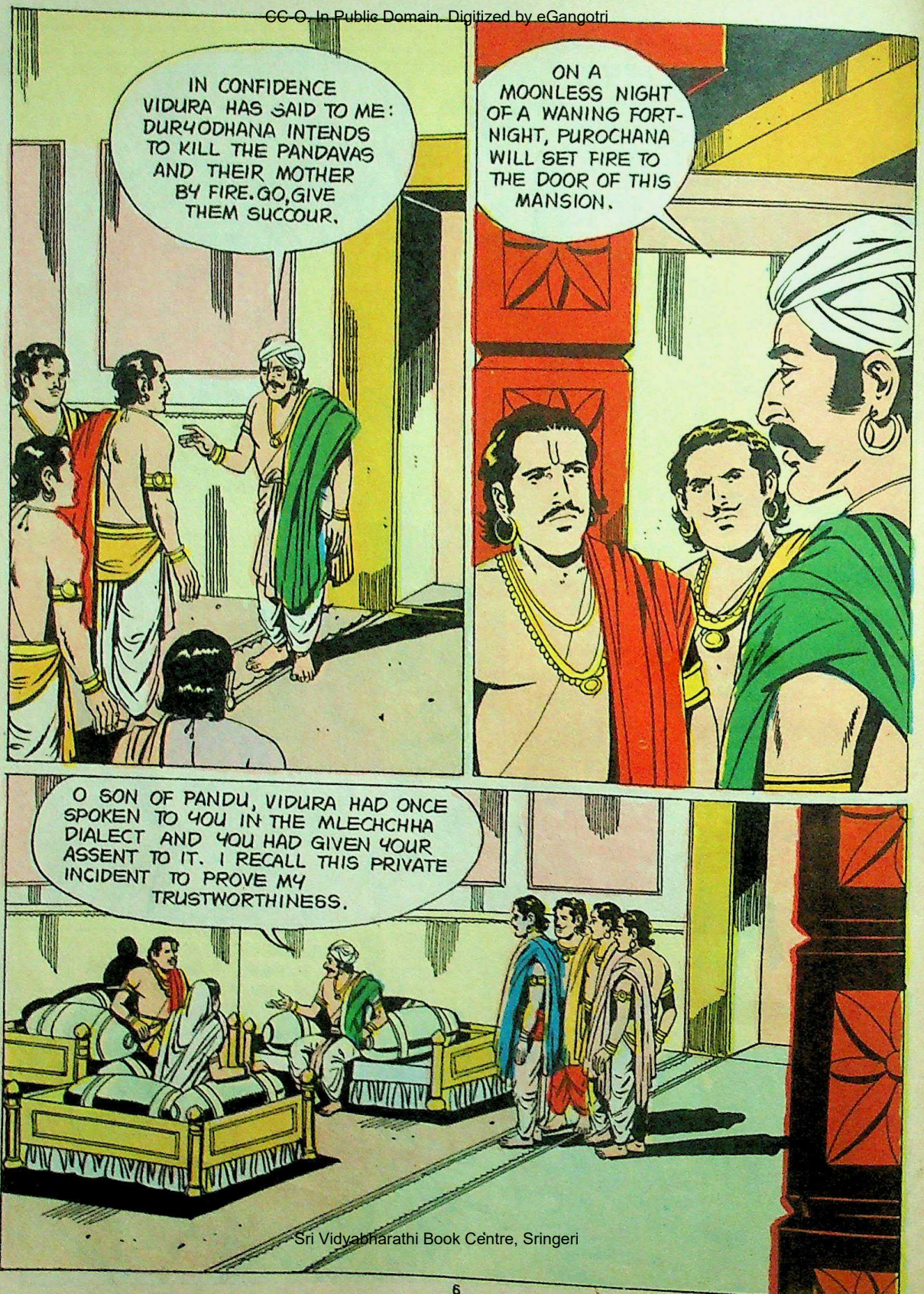

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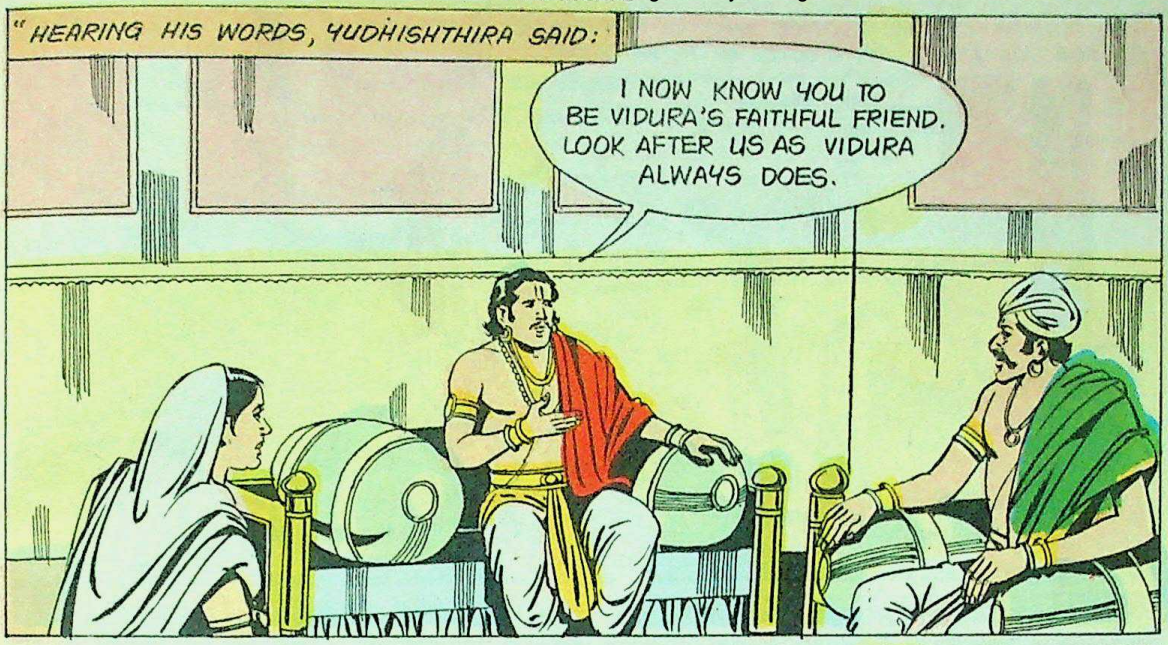

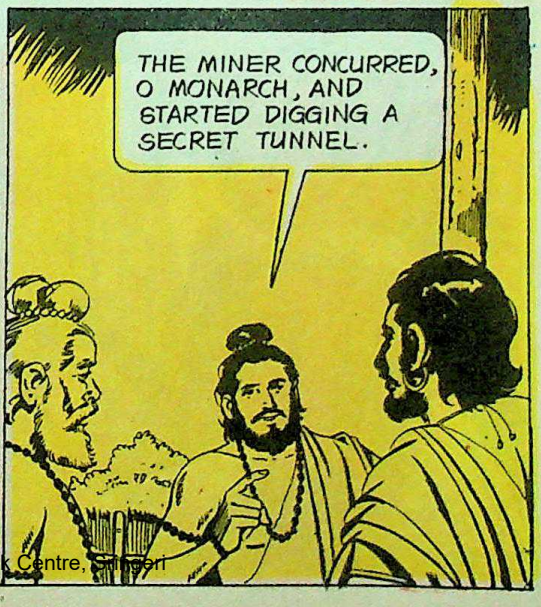

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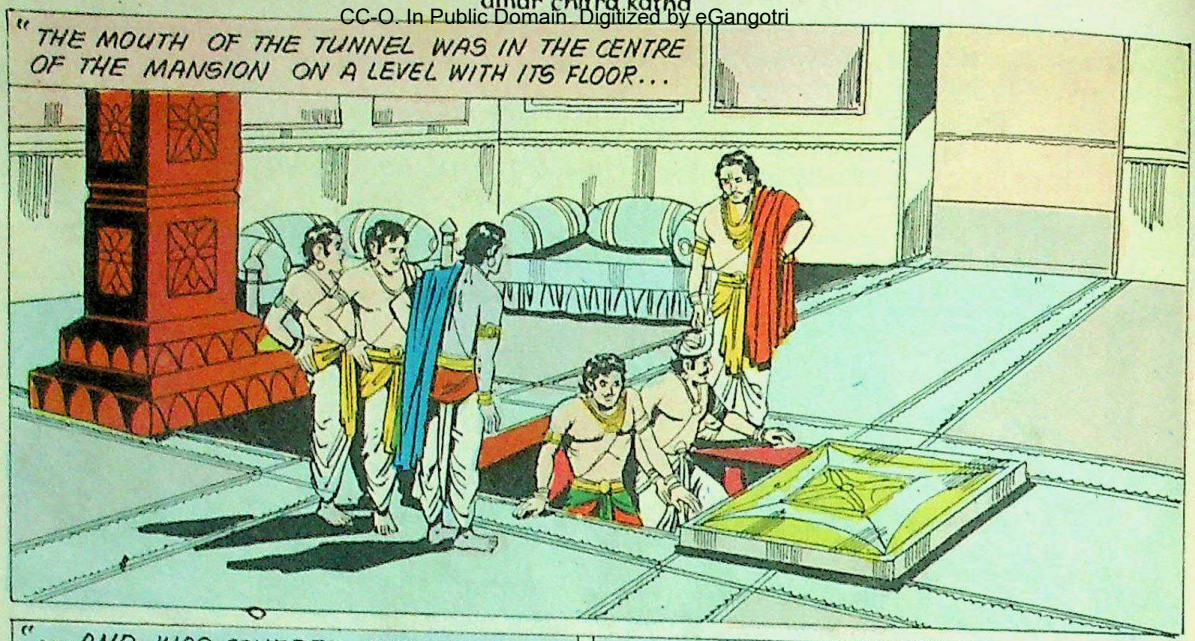

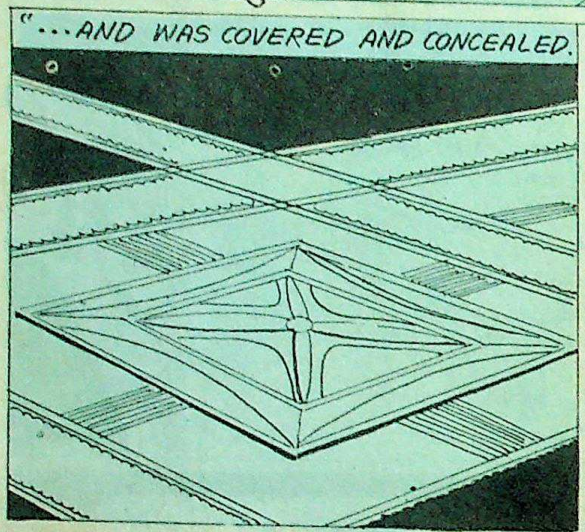

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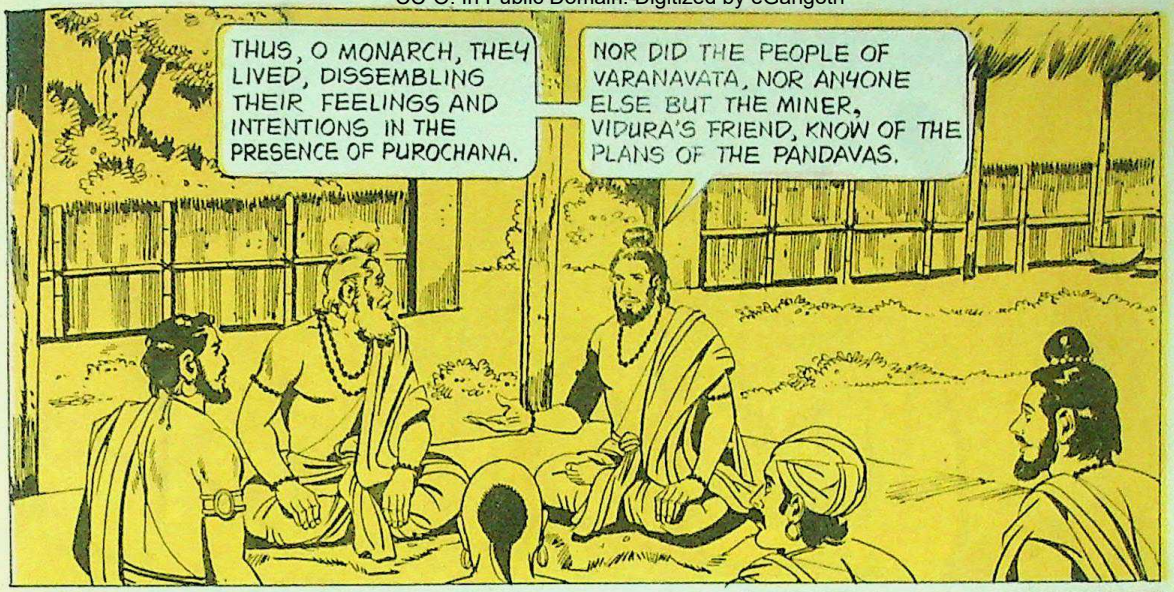

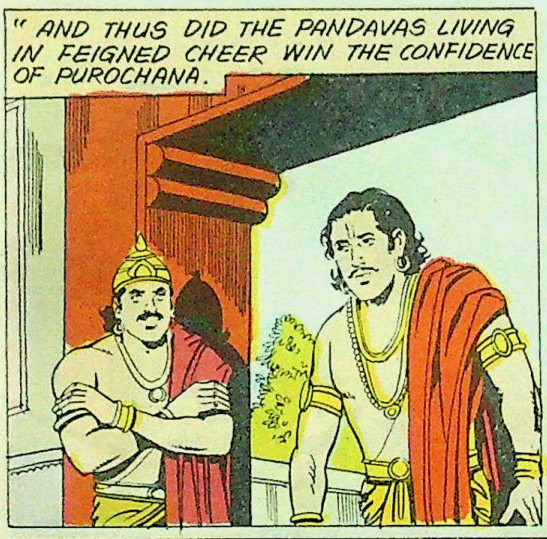

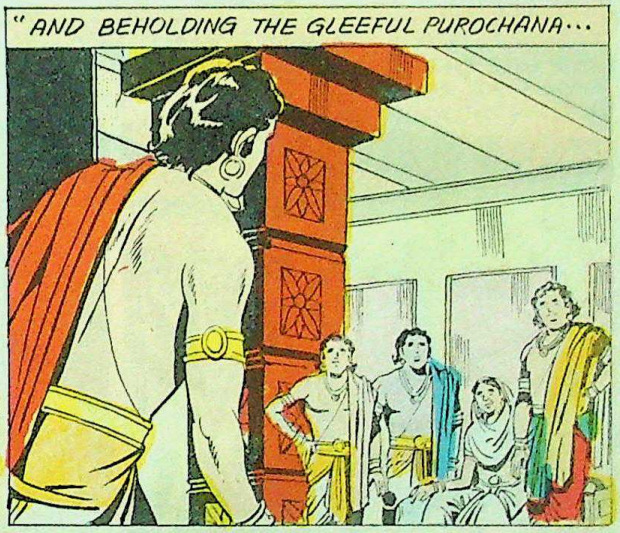

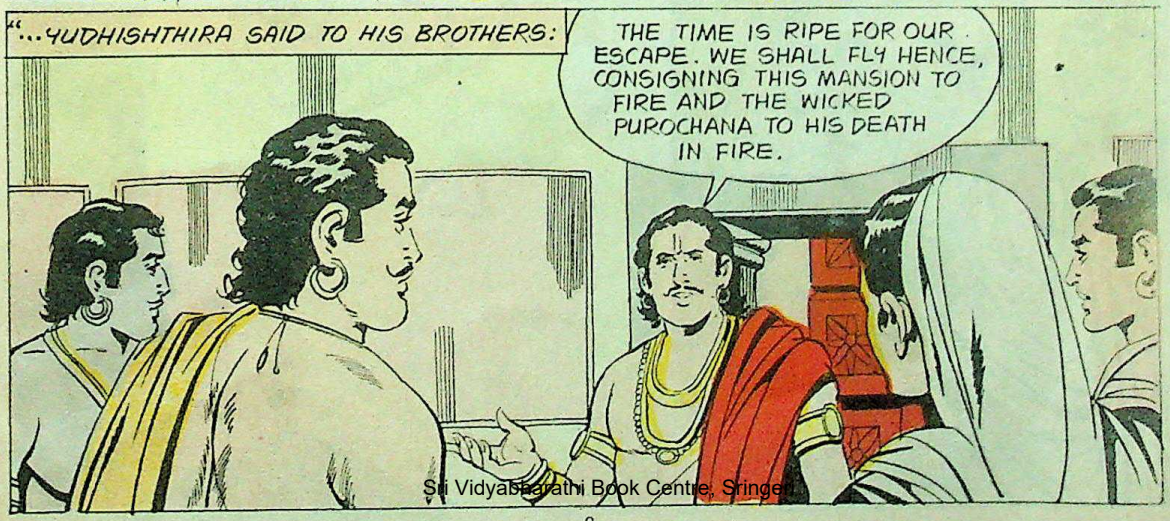

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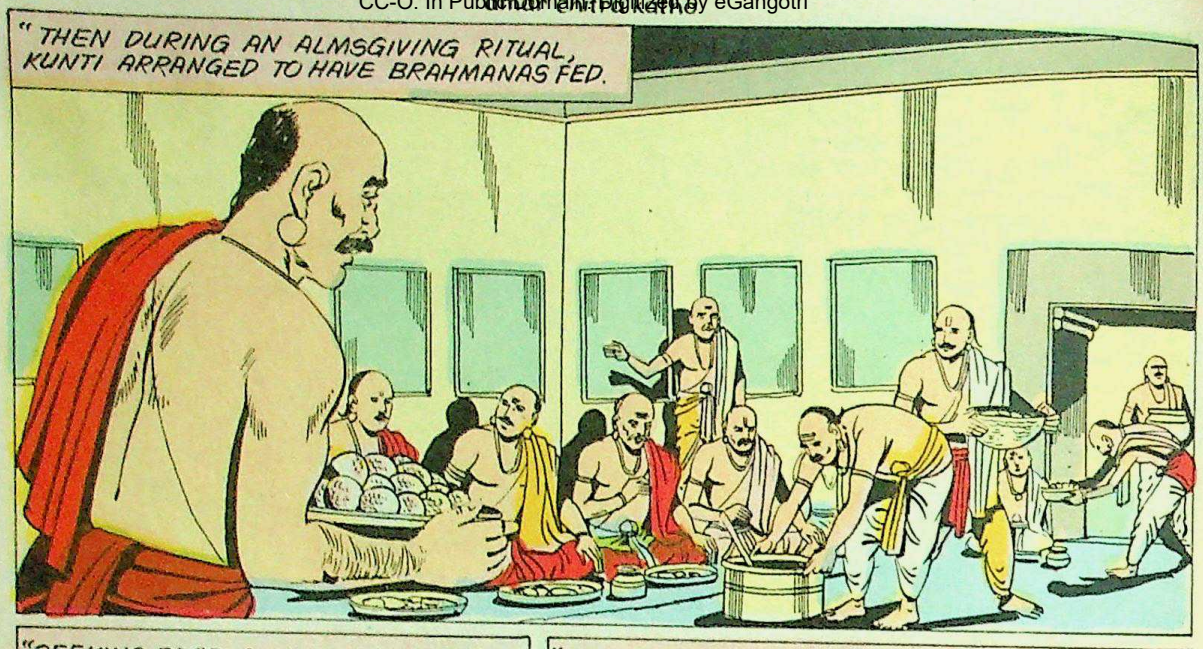

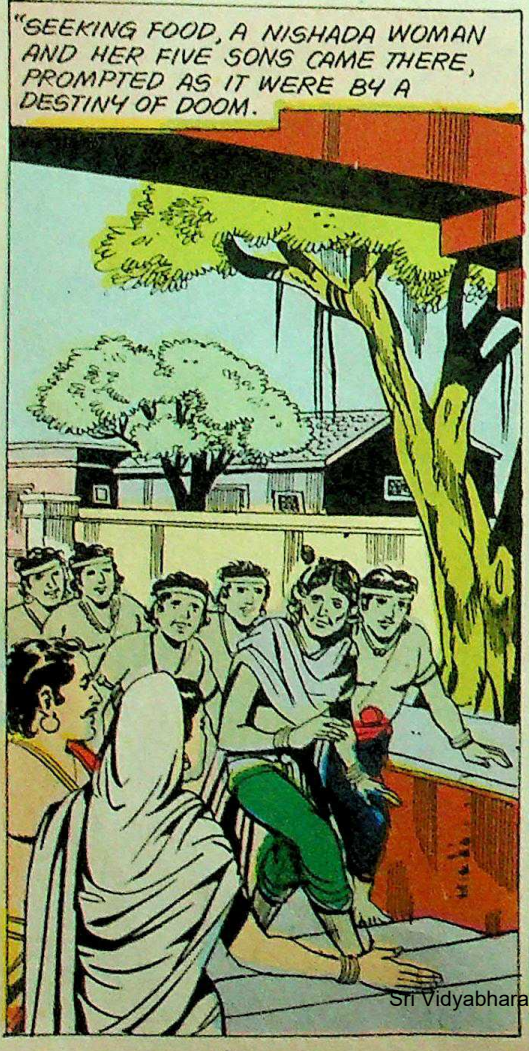

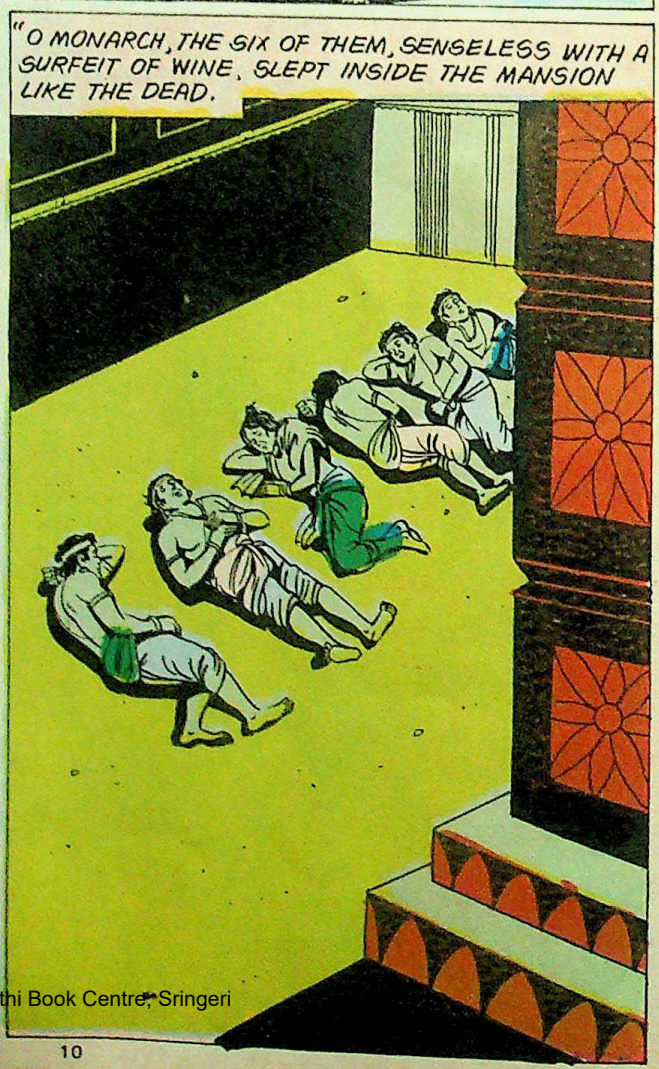

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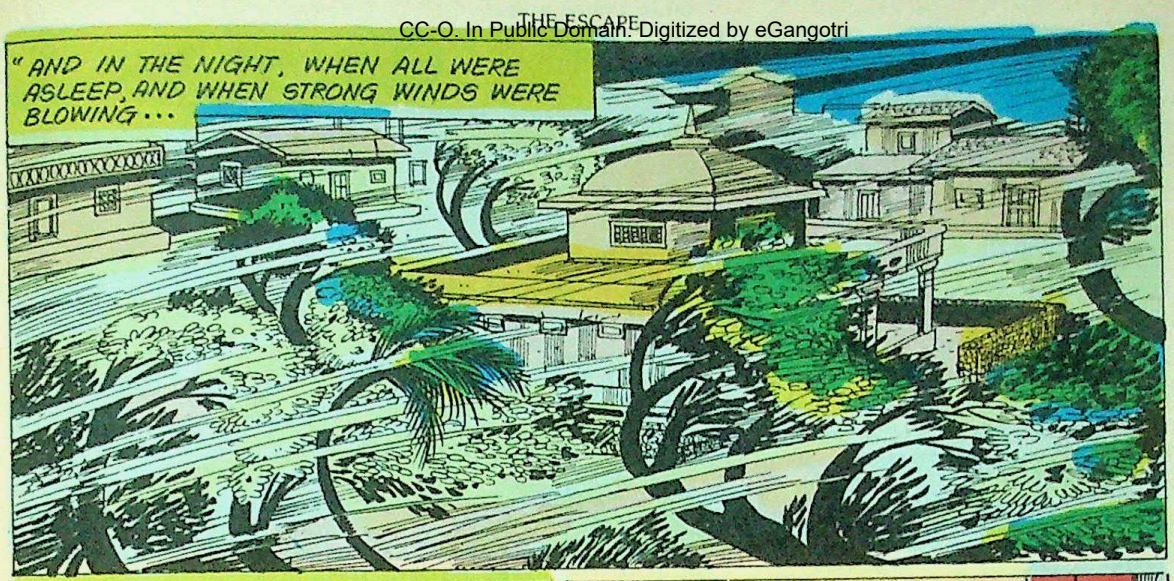

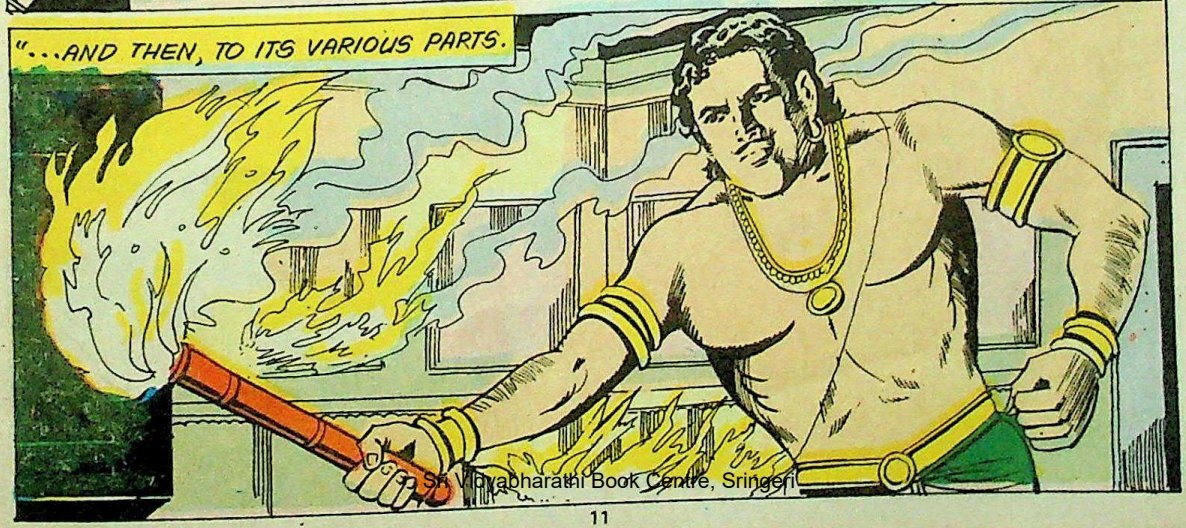

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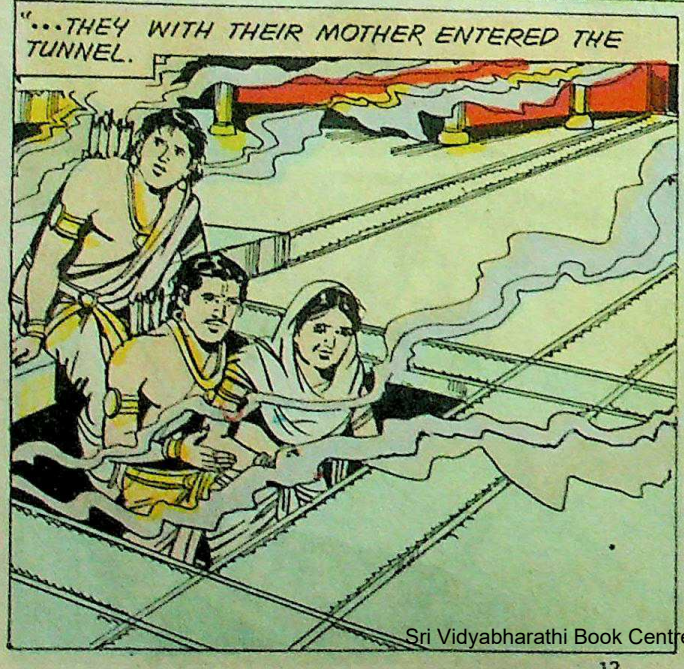

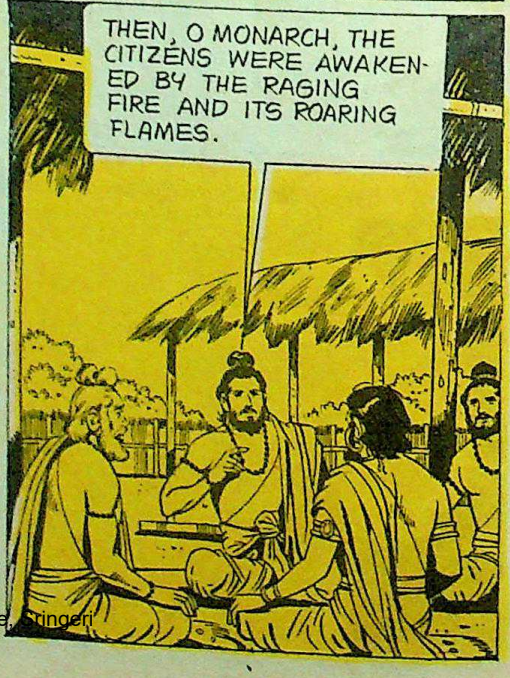

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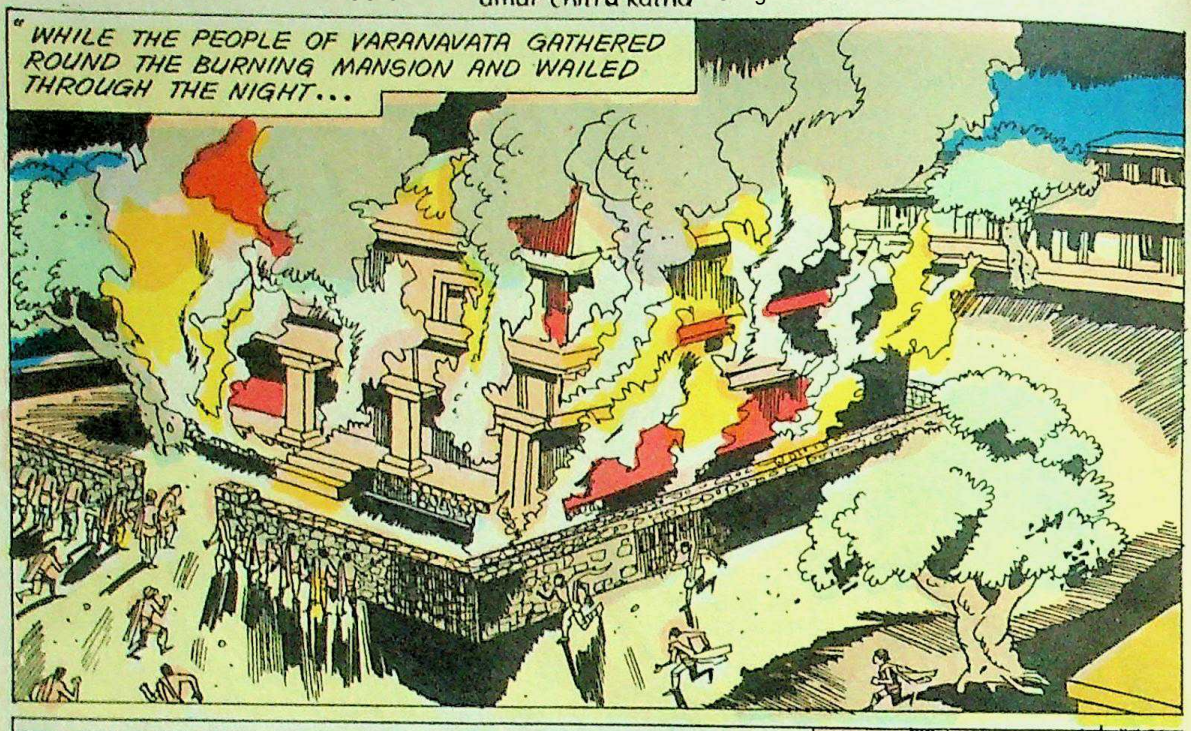

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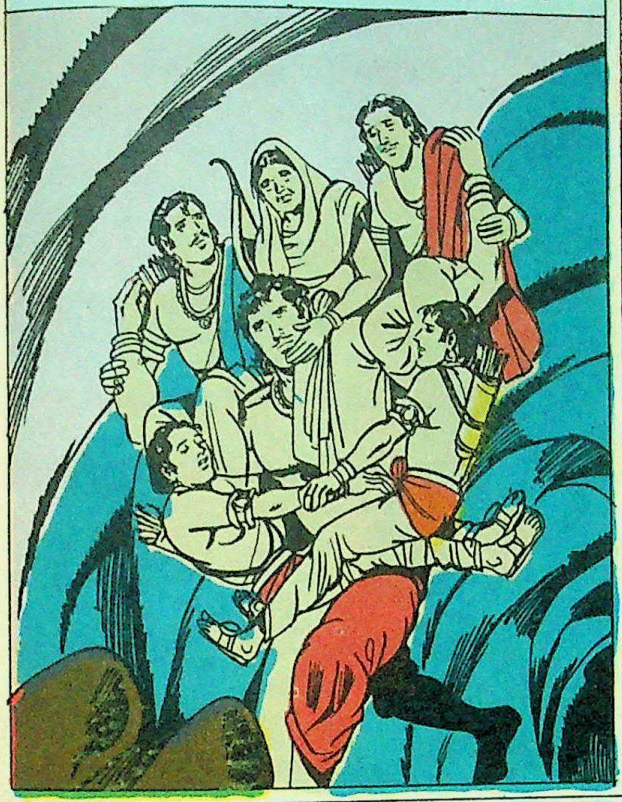
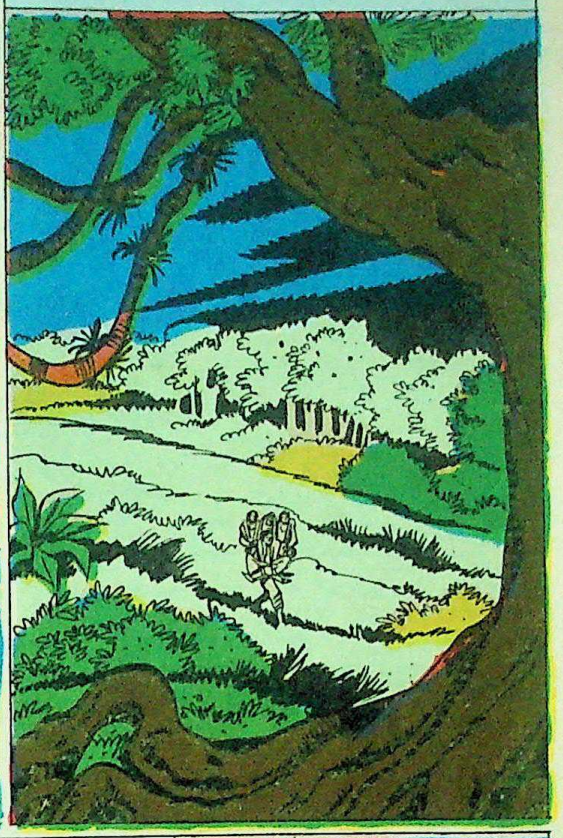
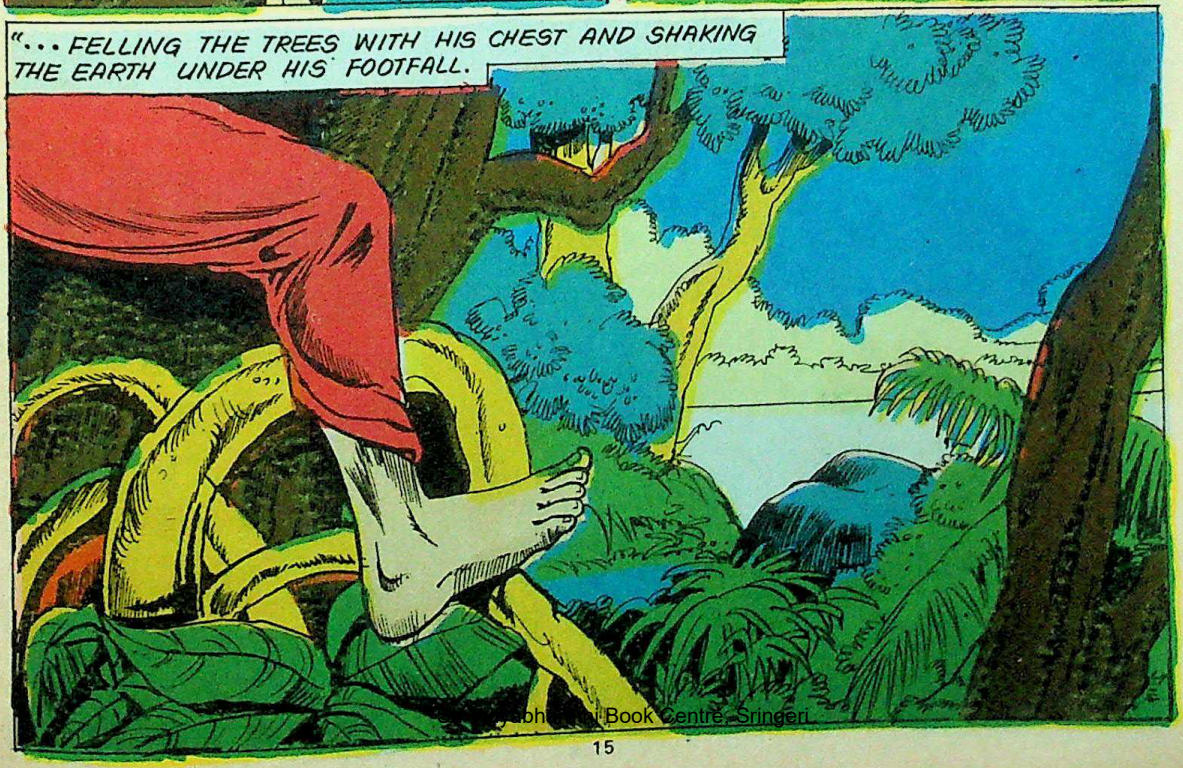
"THEN, O MONARCH, THE VALIANT BHEEMASENA, WITH HIS IMMENSE STRENGTH AND SPEED, CARRIED UPON HIMSELF HIS MOTHER AND HIS BROTHERS...



"...AND CONTINUED ON HIS WAY PUSHING THROUGH THE DARKNESS...



"...FELLING THE TREES WITH HIS CHEST AND SHAKING THE EARTH UNDER HIS FOOTFALL.



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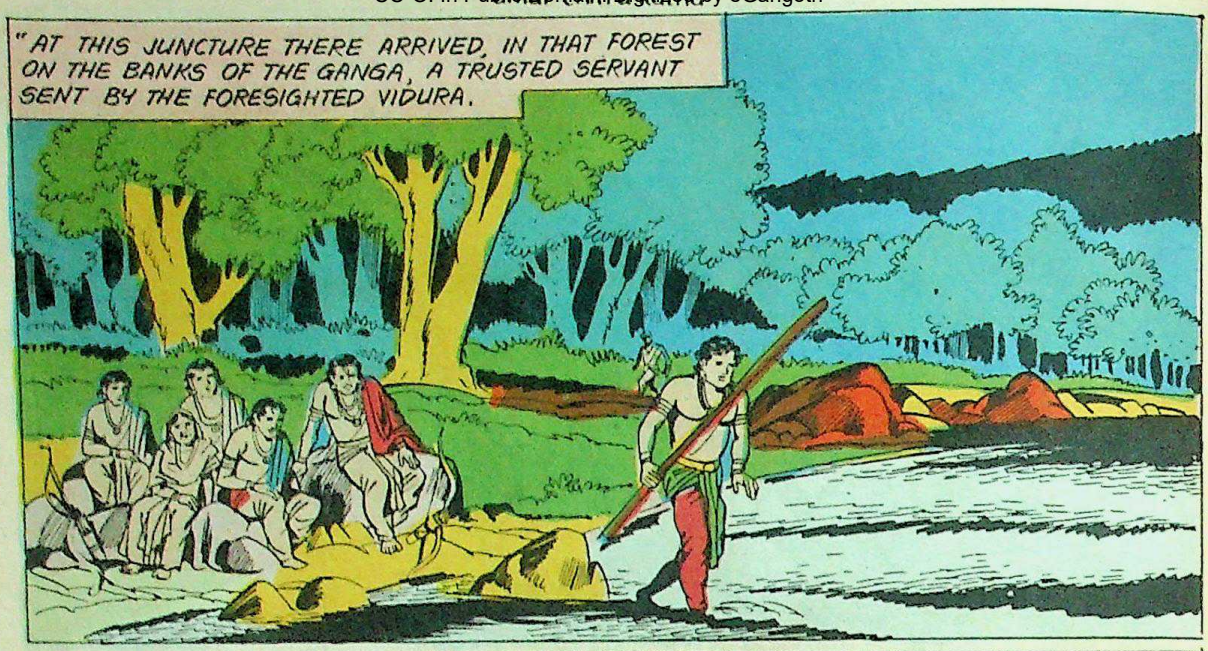

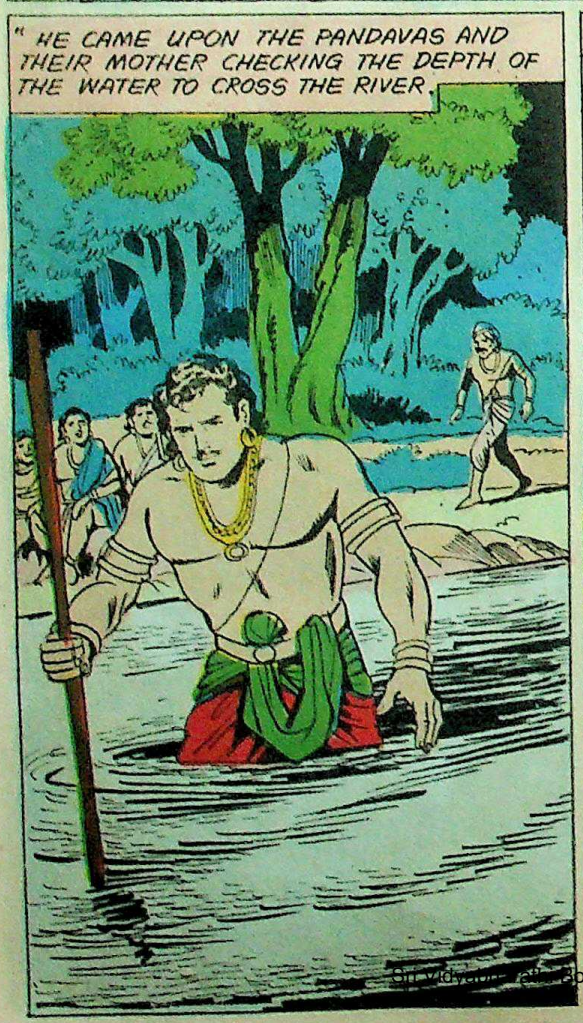

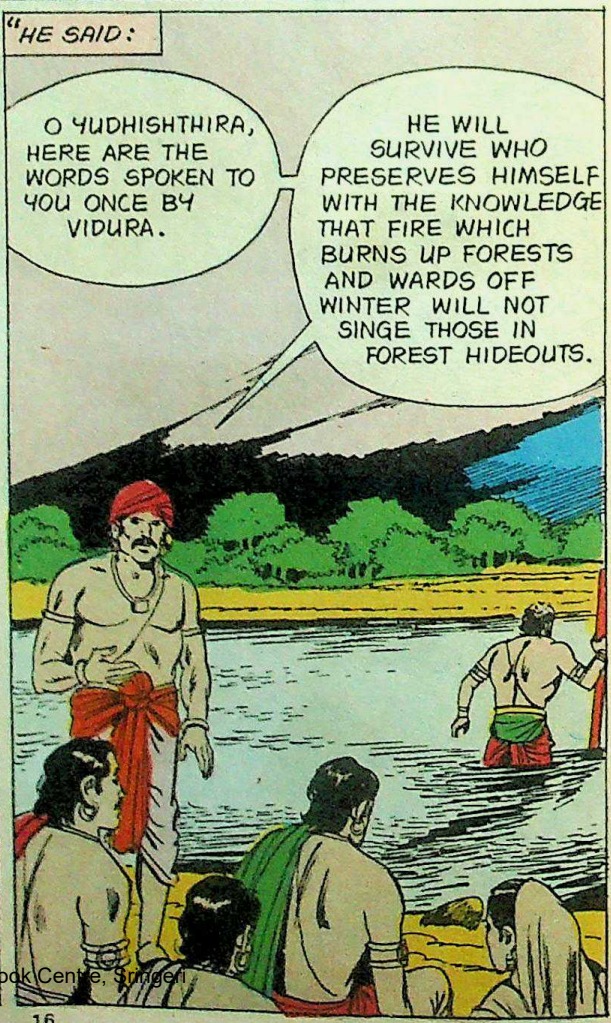

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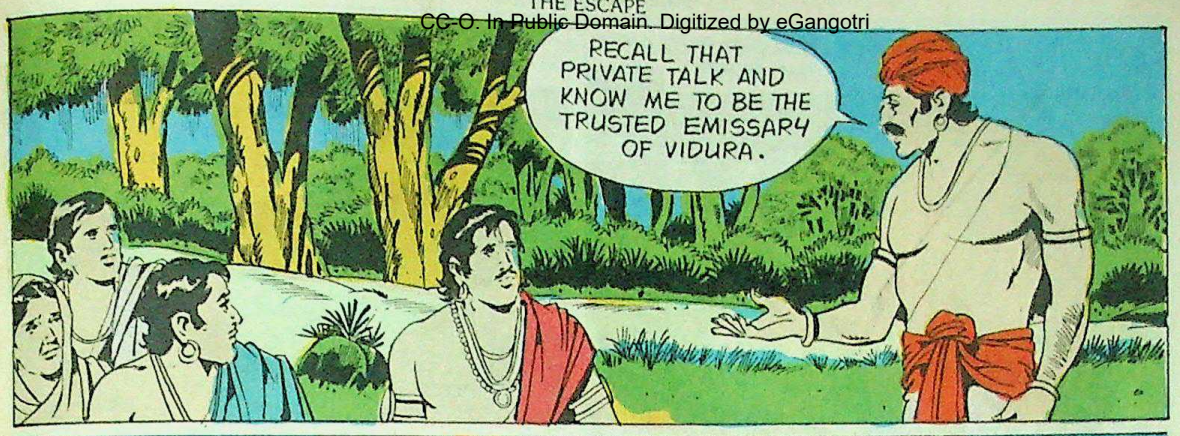

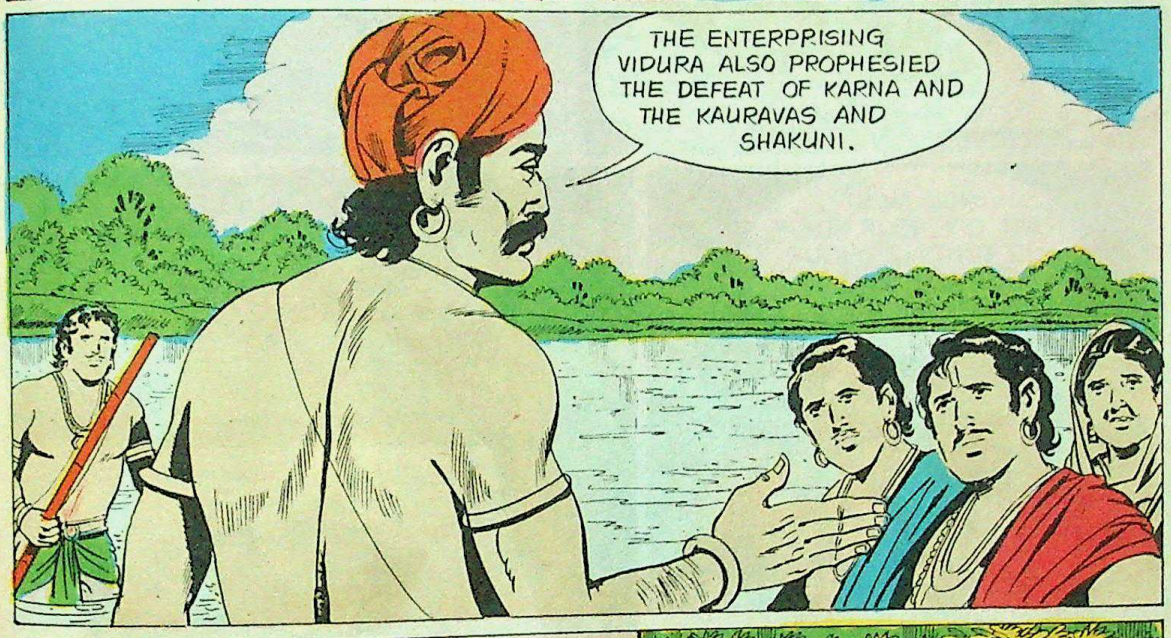

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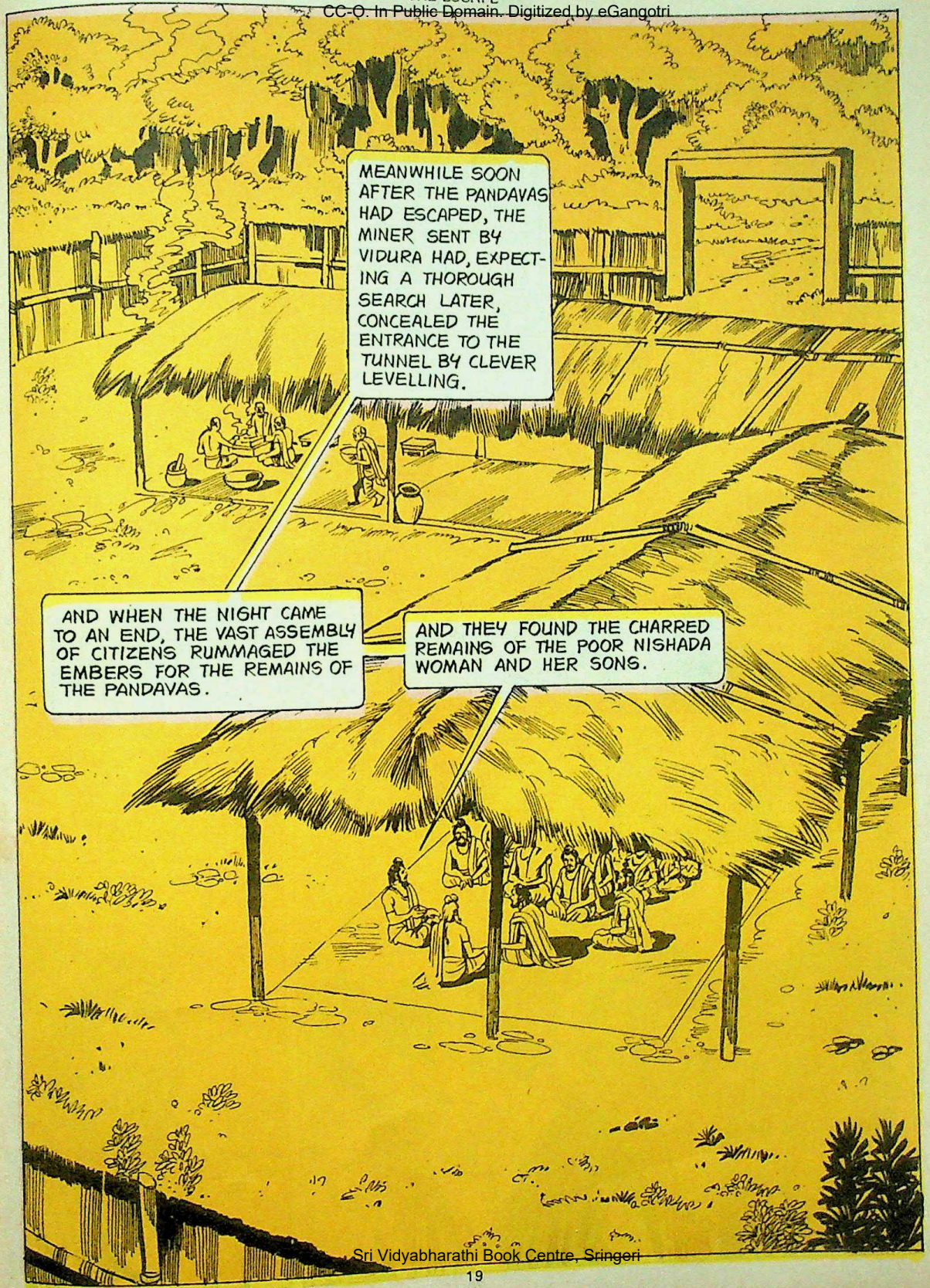

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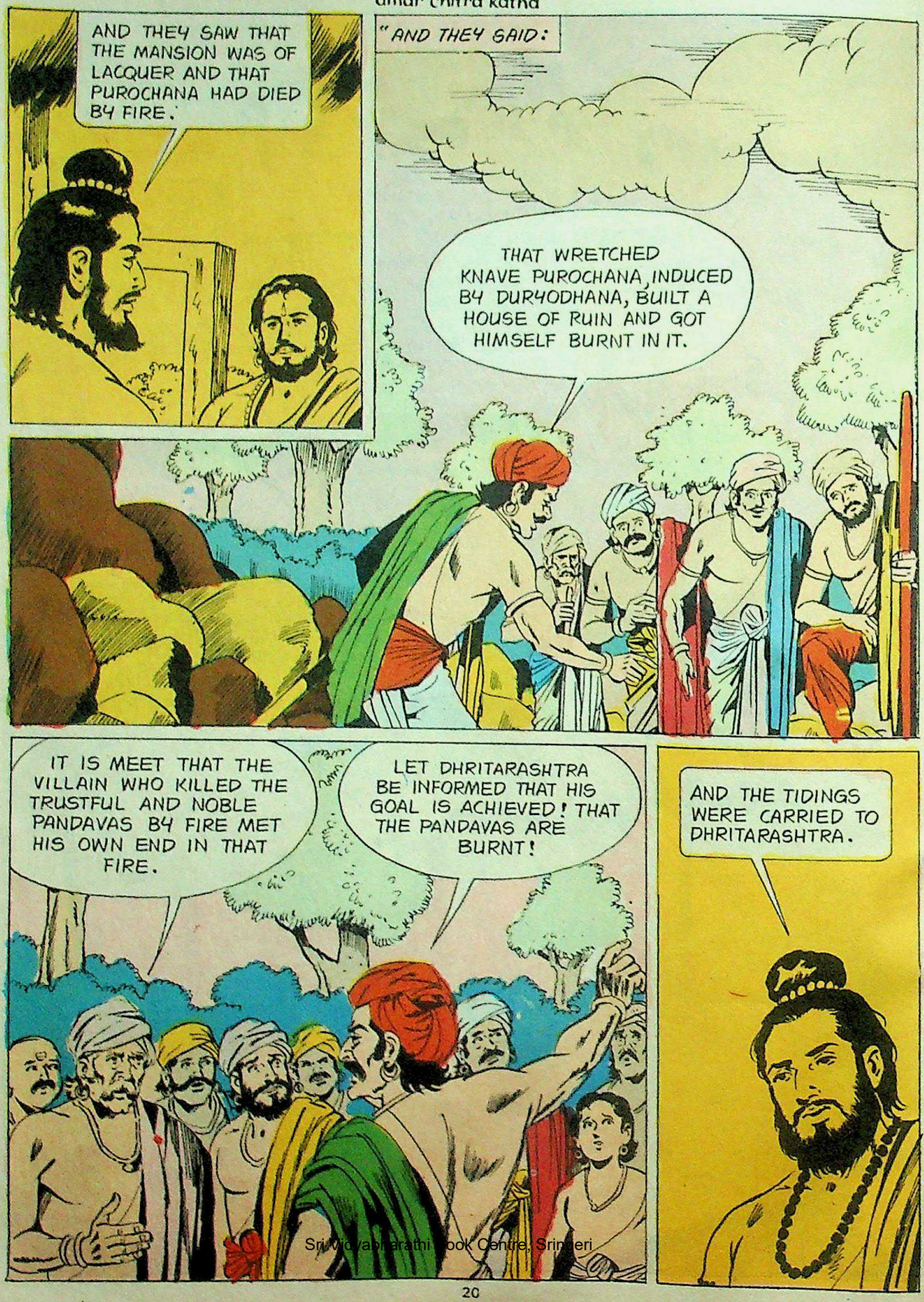

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"WHEN DHRITARASHTRA HEARD OF THE DEATH OF THE PANDAVAS HE WAILED IN DEEP SORROW AND SAID:

I SUFFER THE AGONY OF PANDU'S DEATH TODAY, IN THE DEATH OF THOSE HEROES AND THEIR MOTHER.

LET THEIR KINSMEN AND FRIENDS, AND MY MEN, GO WITHOUT DELAY TO VARANAVATA FOR THE FUNERAL RITES OF THE DAUGHTER OF KUNTIBHOJA AND THOSE VALIANT ONES.

LET ALL THAT MUST BE DONE BY ME FOR THE GOOD OF KUNTI AND THE PANDAVAS BE ACCOMPLISHED BY MY WEALTH.

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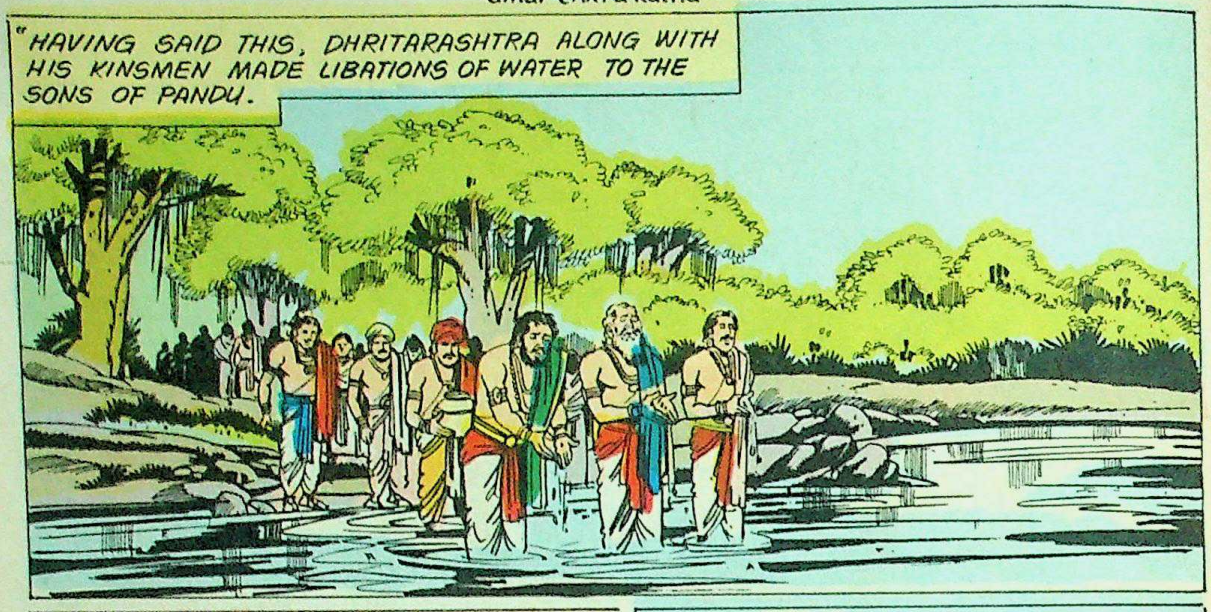

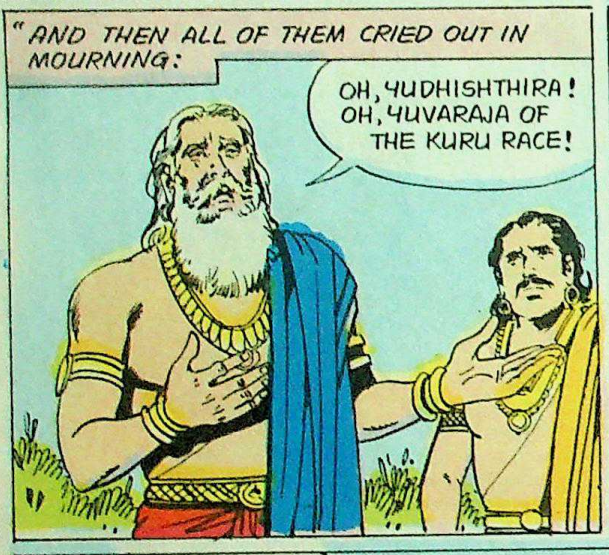

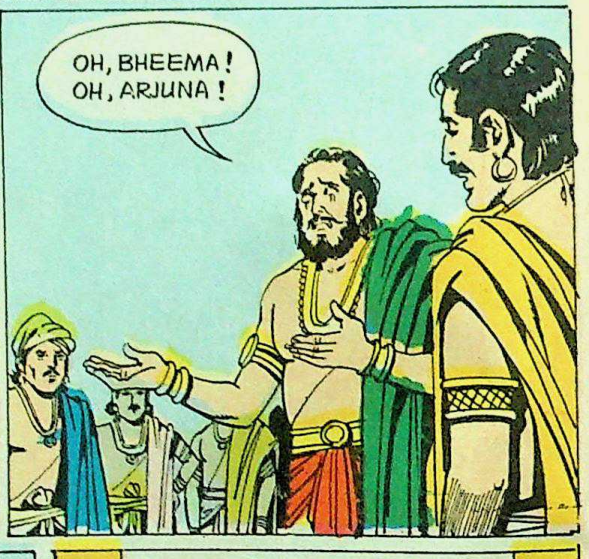

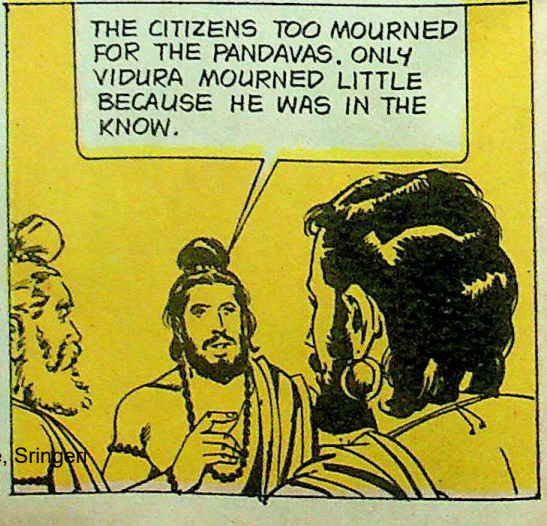

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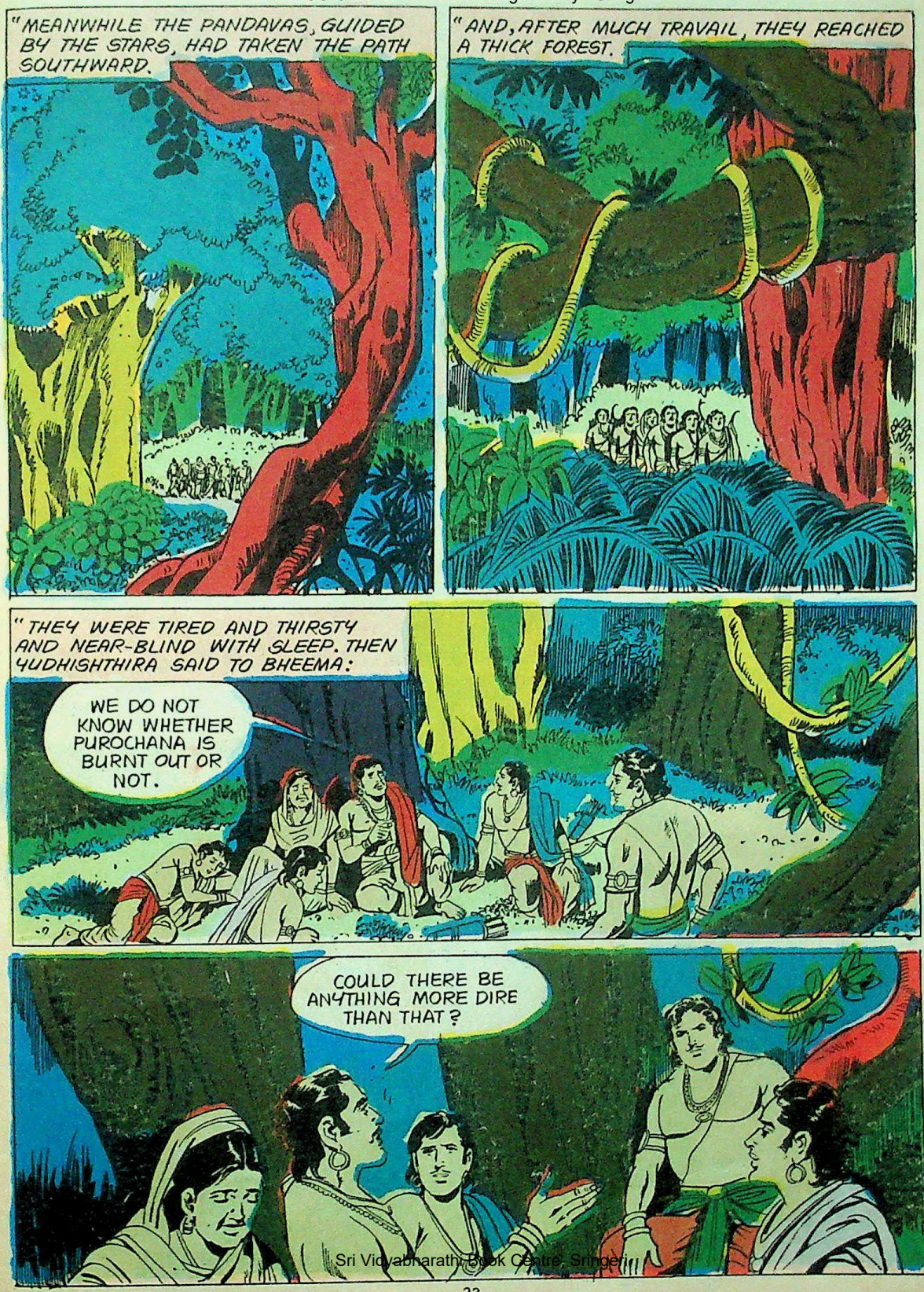

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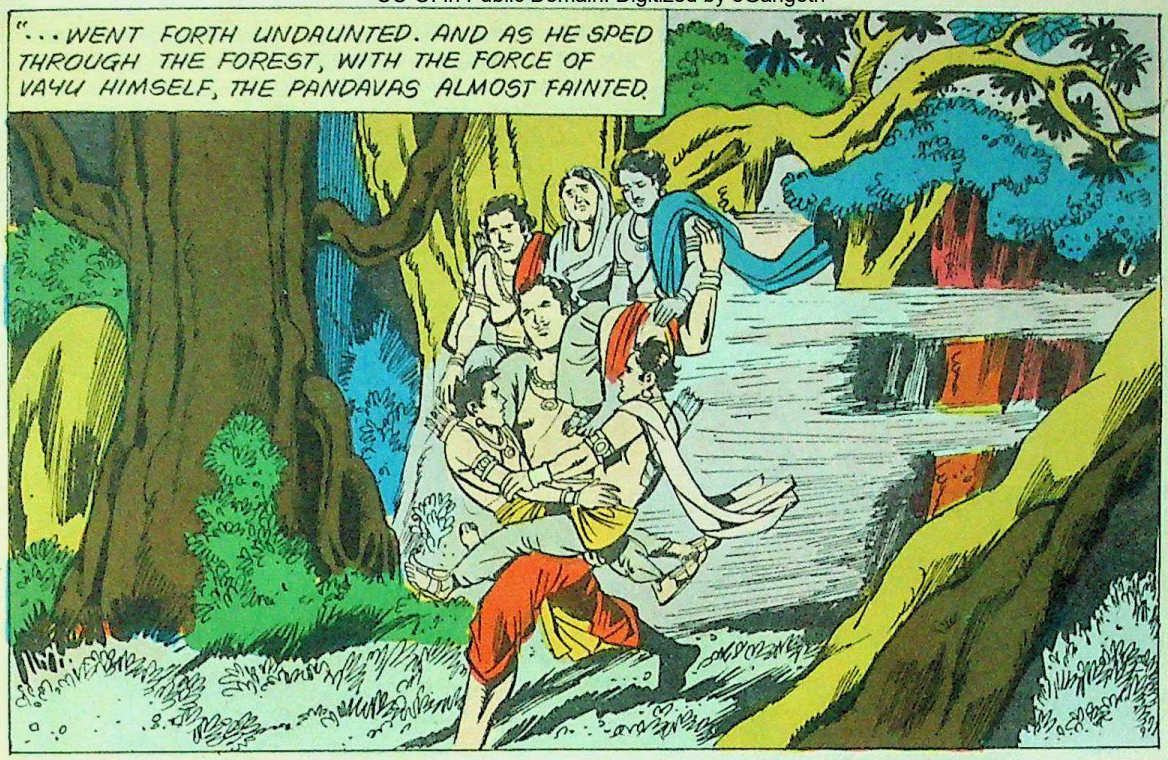

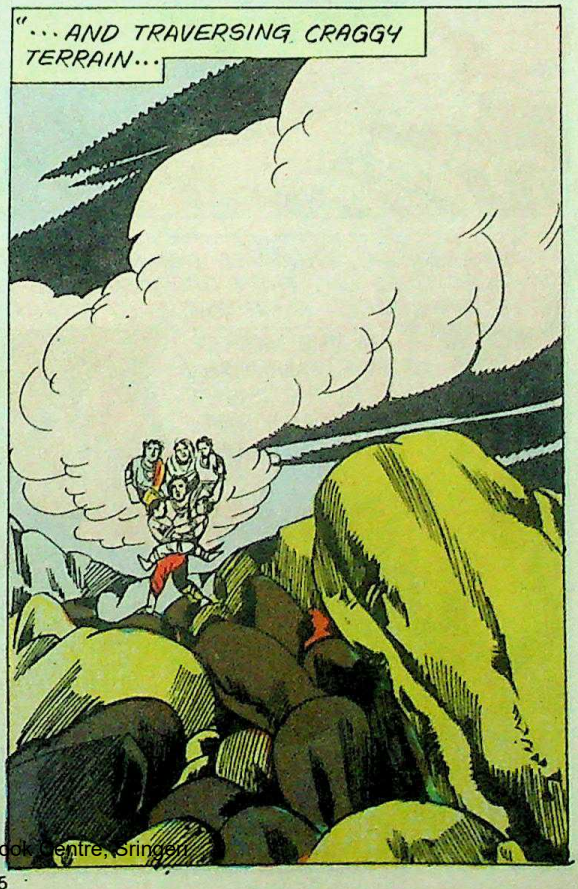

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TOWARDS EVENING HE REACHED A DESOLATE JUNGLE WHERE ROAMED PREDATORY BEASTS AND WHERE THERE WAS SCANT WATER OR FRUITS OR ROOTS.

"AS DARKNESS CREPT UPON THE TWILIGHT, THE HOWL OF ANIMALS TURNED MORE RAUCOUS; AND AN UNTIMELY WIND BEGAN TO BLOW WHICH, TEARING THROUGH THE JUNGLE, SCATTERED THE DRIED LEAVES EVEN AS IT GROUNDED STURDY TREES.

"THE PANDAVAS, WEIGHED DOWN BY SLEEP, WERE UNABLE TO GO ON. THEY SAT DOWN THERE. THEN KUNTI, OPPRESSED BY THIRST, SAID TO HER SONS:

I AM THE MOTHER OF FIVE PANDAVAS. I AM IN THE MIDST OF THEM AND YET I AM RACKED BY THIRST.

THESE WORDS OF HIS MOTHER, O MONARCH, SCORCHED THE HEART OF BHEEMA AND HE SET OUT.

Sri Vidyabha... Book Trust, Stinder...

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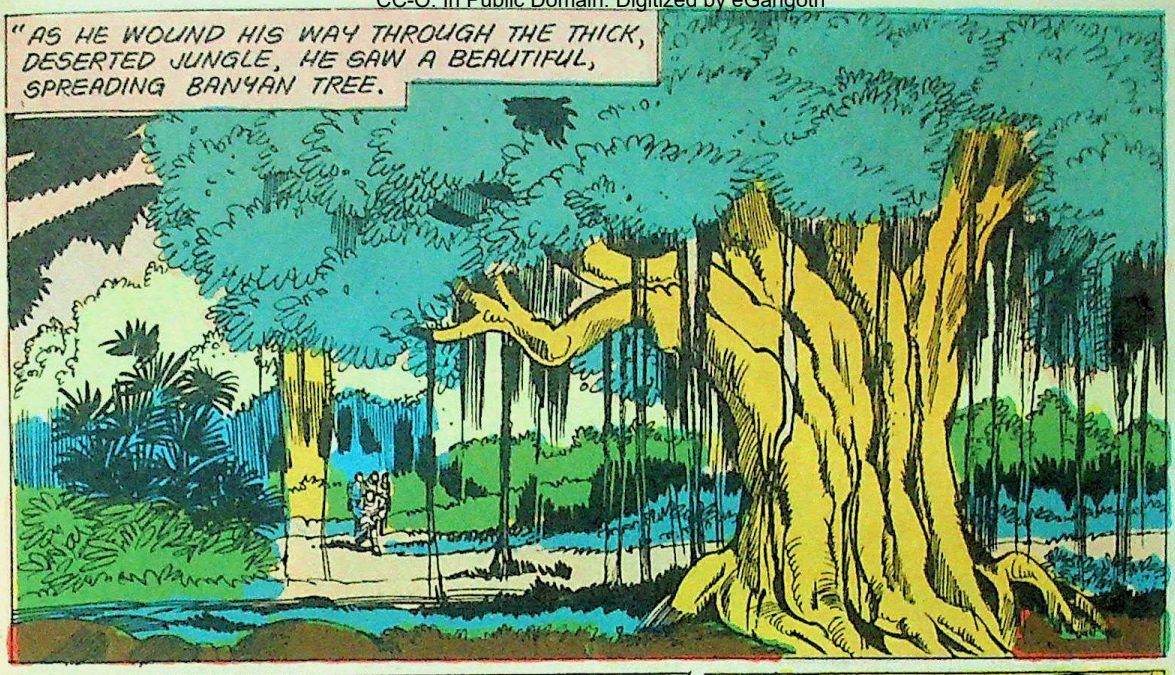

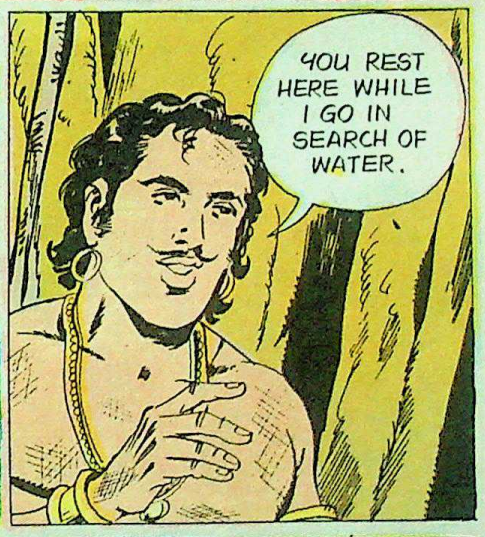

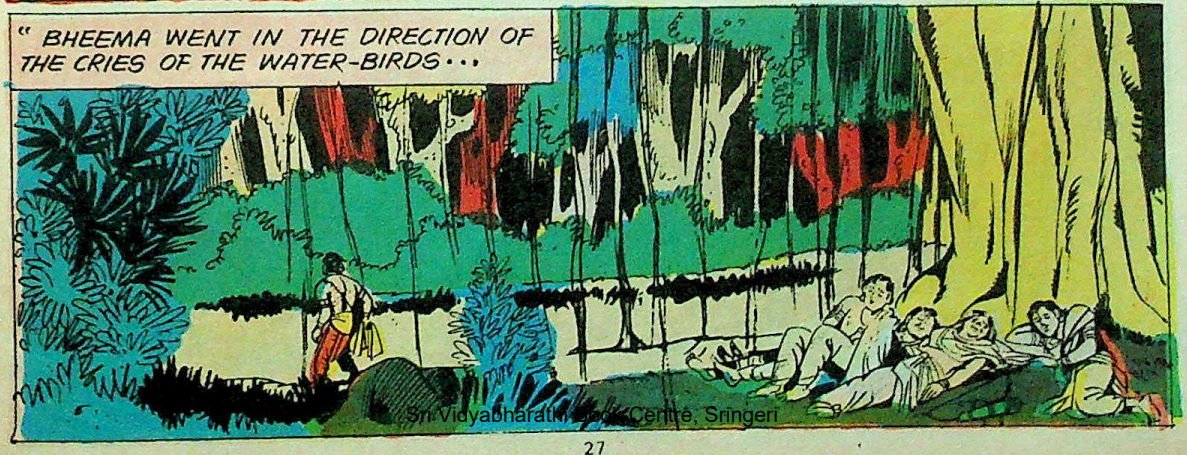

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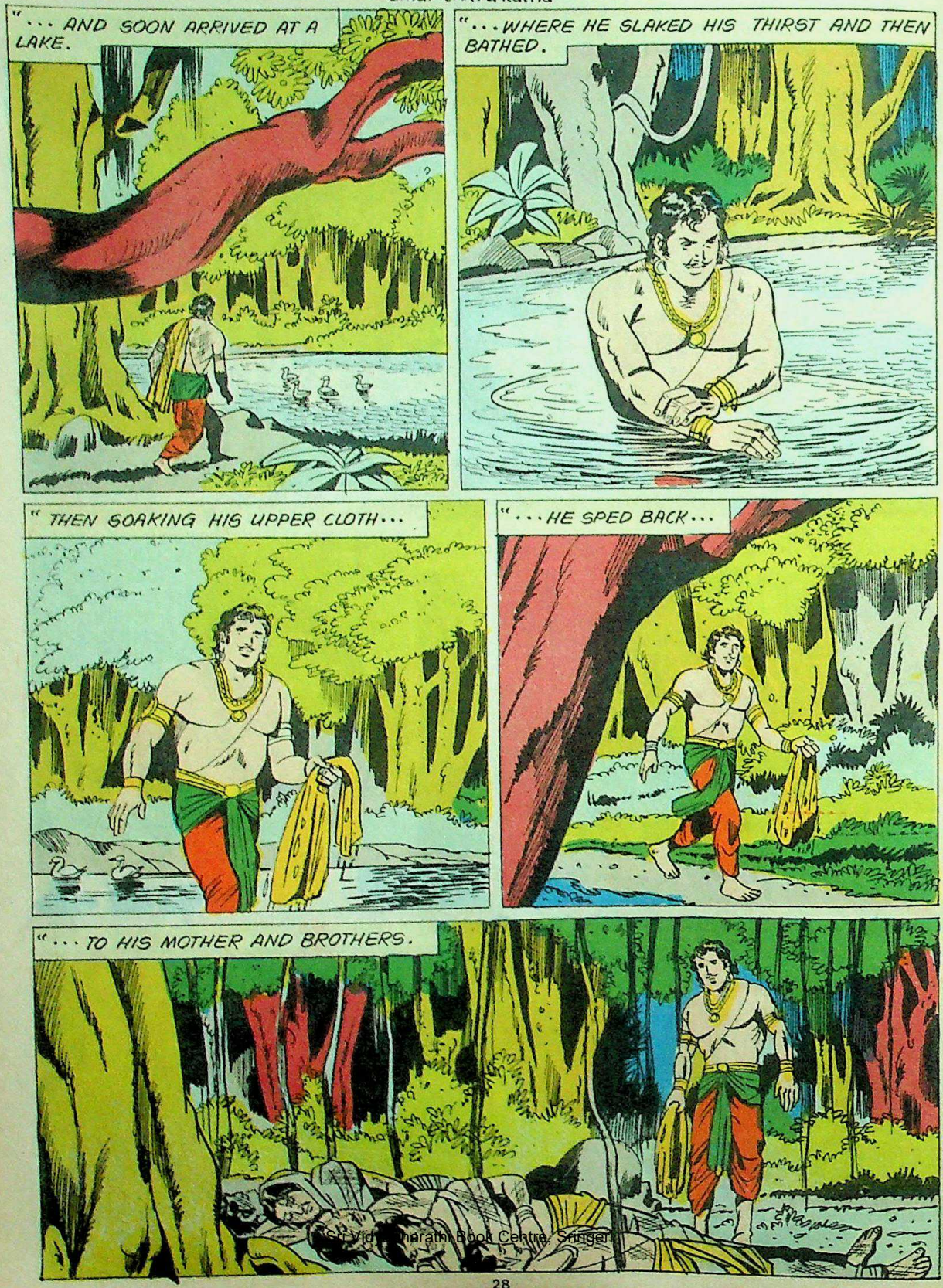

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HE WHO HAS NO RELATIVES TO TAINT THE FAMILY WITH JEALOUSY, IS HAPPY IN THIS WORLD, LIKE THE SOLITARY FRUIT-BEARING TREE WHICH COMES TO BE REVERED AS SACRED BY ALL BECAUSE IT IS UNIQUE.

THOSE WHO ABOUND IN RELATIVES WHO ARE JUST AND VALIANT ARE ALSO HAPPY IN THIS WORLD.

THOSE WHO ARE POWERFUL WITH AMPLE WEALTH, AND AN ABUNDANCE OF FRIENDS AND RELATIVES, STAND TALL LIKE THE TREES OF A FOREST.

AS FOR US, IT HAS BEEN EXILE AT THE HANDS OF WICKED DHRITARASHTRA AND HIS SONS; AND A FORTUITOUS ESCAPE FROM A FIERY DEATH.

O DURYODHANA, YOUR VISION IS IMPAIRED. YOU REMAIN SMUG IN THE THOUGHT THAT THE GODS ARE WITH YOU.

BUT IF YOU ARE ALIVE IT IS ONLY BECAUSE YUDHISHTHIRA DOES NOT GET ANGRY WITH YOU AND COMMAND ME TO KILL YOU.

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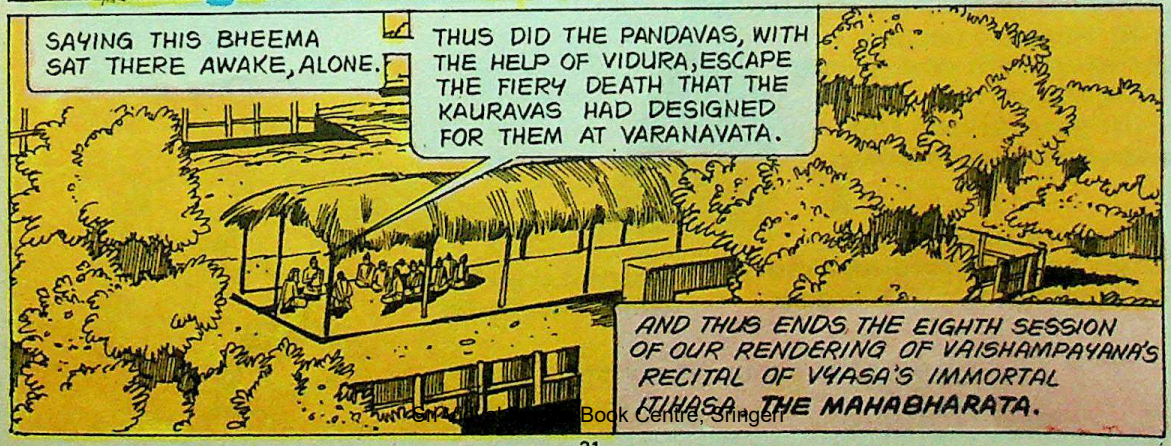

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GET AN ATTRACTIVE 'ASIAN WILD LIFE ALBUM' AND 100 'FOLD UP LETTERS'- FREE.

No entry fee!
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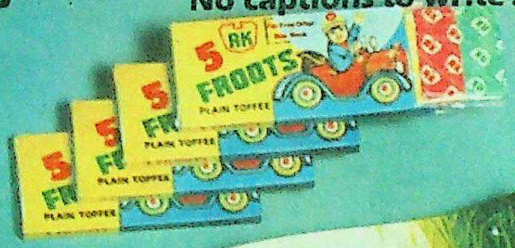
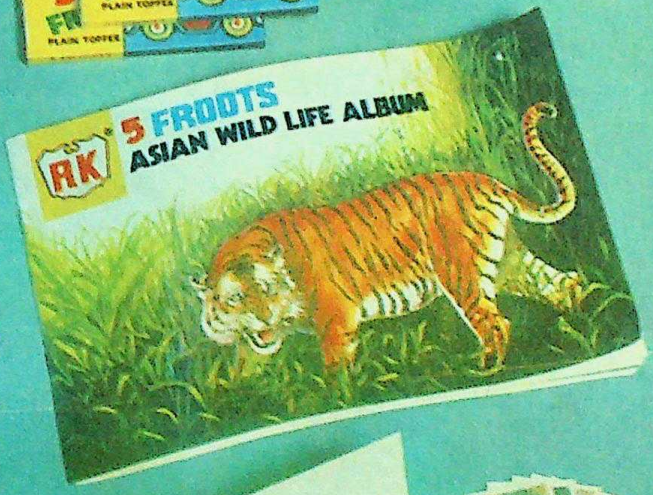
All you have to do is send us 4 empty 5 Froots packs along with a Re.1 postage stamp inside the envelope...



... And, we will send you an attractive 'Asian Wild life Album' –



Complete the album with 'Animal Picture Cards' available in every 5 Froots pack. And receive 100 'Fold Up Letters' printed with your name and address.
Plus your album too!

Animal Picture Cards' available in every 5 Froots pack.

What could be better than eating more and more of your favourite 5 Froots.

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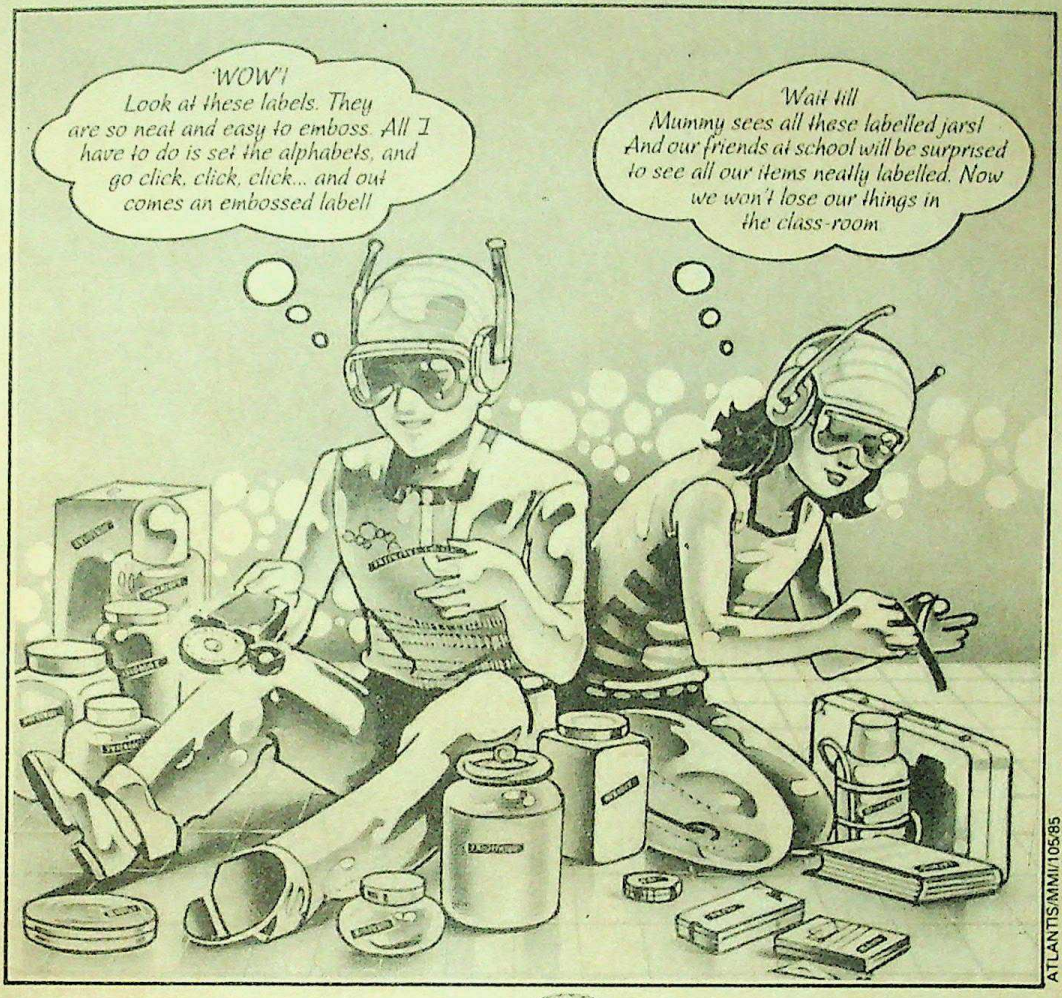

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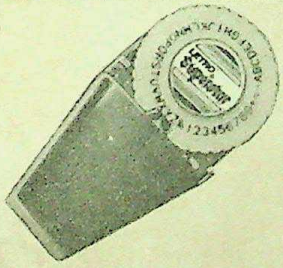

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You can swirl it. You can twirl it. You can curl your tongue around it. 'Cos it's smooth rich caramel on the outside with real Cadbury's Dairy Milk chocolate tucked inside. Just waiting to be licked and licked and l-l-l-licked...

Cadbury's
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